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ABSTRACT

This report examines the writing portfolio evaluations (administered between 1993-1998) of former Columbia Basin College (CBC) students who transferred to Washington State University (WSU). The WSU writing portfolio acts as a diagnostic aid to assure that all students can be successful college writers. The evaluation is required of all WSU students after they have completed English 101 and before they have completed 61 credits. Each student's portfolio contains three papers written as part of WSU courses as well as two timed essays written in an examination environment. Portfolios are evaluated in two tiers by several evaluators and are given a designation of: Pass with Distinction, Pass, and Needs Work. The results indicate: 6% more CBC students received a designation of "Pass," but 5% more CBC students received a designation of "Needs Work" than the general population of WSU students. (CB)

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CBC STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON THE WSU WRITING PORTFOLIO, 1993-1998

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Introduction

The CBC Assessment Committee determined in 1997-98 that measuring how well CBC students performed after transfer to a four-year institution should be a part of the CBC Institutional Effectiveness Plan. However, with the new interpretation of the FERPA regulations regarding release of student specific information, the four-year institutions stopped providing community colleges with college major, number of credits, gpa, and other information on a regular basis as they had done in past years. In order to have some measurement of CBC student transfer success, the Office of Institutional Research approached Washington State University for information on CBC student's performance on the WSU Writing Portfolio.

In December of 1998, Washington State University provided the CBC Office of Institutional Research with valuable information on CBC student's performance on the WSU Writing Portfolio from 1993 through 1998.

Purpose of the Portfolio

The University Writing Portfolio acts as a diagnostic aid to assure that all students have enough support to respond successfully to the writing experiences presented in the major, especially in the writing-intensive (M) courses. Students who need more support—those whose portfolios earn a "Needs Work" designation from readers—enroll in Gen. Ed. 302, a tutorial that runs concurrently with their first (M) course.

The Portfolio is also designed to recognize the top 10% of WSU students, who will receive the designation "Pass with Distinction" on their transcripts as a statement of the importance of writing itself and as an incentive for students to excel in this area.

Portfolio Process

After completing English 101 and before completing 61 credit hours, students present a WSU Writing Portfolio. The Portfolio includes:

·Three papers from courses taken at WSU

· Two timed writings, which students write in an examination-like setting.

During the semester in which a student completes the 61st credit, she/he purchases a portfolio kit, which contains all the materials and instructions needed in order to complete the portfolio.

The portfolio is designed as a diagnostic tool. It allows WSU to provide the support some writers need as they move into their (M) courses. However, the portfolio is also a graduation requirement; students may not graduate unless they have received at least a "Pass" on the University Writing Portfolio.

Students only have to take the portfolio once. They receive a result of either Pass (AC), Pass with Distinction (EX) or Needs Work (NW). If a student receives a Needs Work rating, he/she must complete additional course work to fulfill the portfolio requirement.

Once they have completed this coursework, the student does not have to resubmit the portfolio. Most students are required to take a one credit upper-division writing tutorial with their upper-division writing in the major course. Some are required to take a three-credit course if their writing abilities are particularly weak.

The portfolio is evaluated in two tiers. The first tier reads the timed essay. The essays are rated as Pass, Needs Work, or Exceptional. The timed essays that receive a Pass rating are finished. Their final result is "Pass." The timed essay reader must concur with the raters of the three course papers—no one can turn in a course paper marked "unacceptable."

If the timed essay is rated Needs Work or Exceptional by the Tier I rater, then the Tier II rater evaluates the entire portfolio—the timed essay and the three course papers. The Needs Work portfolios either receive a rating of Pass or Needs Work, and the Exceptional portfolios receive a rating of Pass or Pass with Distinction.

Results of the study

From information received from WSU, we find that 66% of CBC students pass Tier I (timed essay). Some of the students (48%) are referred to Tier II for one of two reasons (1) to be evaluated by a second evaluator to possibly be considered for Passing With Distinction and (2) to have the Needs Work evaluation confirmed by a second evaluator.

Some students who receive as AC (Acceptable) rating at Tier I are referred to Tier II for possible designation of Passing With Distinction. 12% of Tier I students received the Exceptional rating on the timed essay and the rater was then required to evaluate the complete portfolio—the timed essay and the three course papers and receive from the Tier II rater a rating of Pass or Pass with Distinction. 23% of Tier I students receive the Needs Work designation and the rater was required to evaluate the complete portfolio for these students.

Of those students required to be evaluated in the second tier, 73% of CBC students received a Pass rating by the Tier II rater. 12% of those students receiving an Exceptional Rating are rated as Pass with Distinction and 15% are referred for additional course work.

Overall, 66% of CBC students received an Acceptable designation; 6% received a Pass With Distinction; and 7% ended up being confirmed for needing Additional Work.

Using the entire WSU population, about 60% receive a rating of Acceptable. At the second tier, 80% receive a rating of Acceptable; 10% receive the rating Pass with Distinction; and 10% receive the Needs Work rating and must complete additional course work to finish the portfolio requirement.

Conclusions

Comparing CBC students with the entire WSU student population (including transfer students), we see that CBC students received the Pass designation in the first tier 6%

more often than the WSU population. This speaks very well for CBC student's preparation.

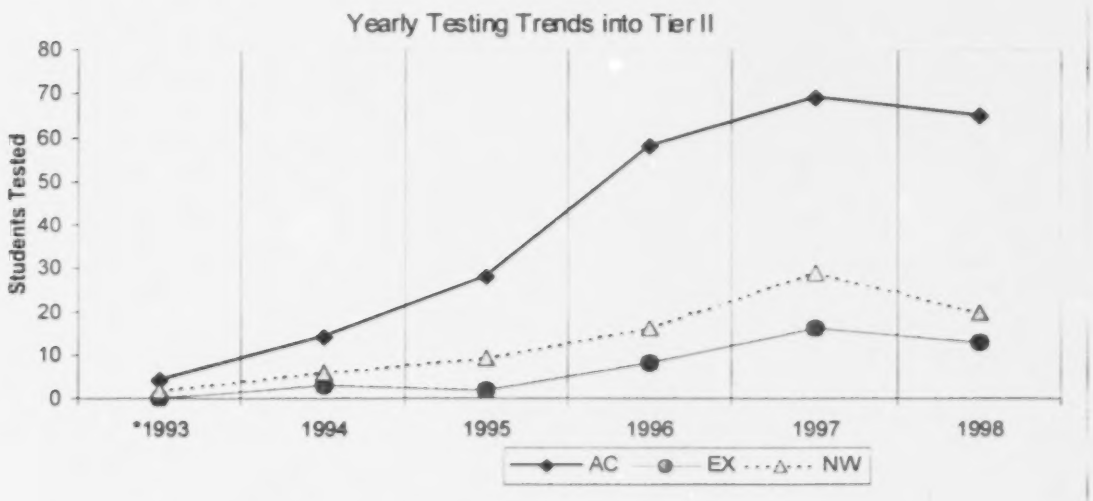
Of those referred to the second tier, CBC students received an Acceptable rate 7% less than WSU students. However, two percent more of CBC students Passed with Distinction and 5% more received the designation Needs Work than WSU students. Twenty-one CBC students needed additional coursework in the six year period.

It is hoped that information like the information provided by WSU on the Writing Portfolio will be available to community colleges in order to track how well CBC students do after transfer. This information is of value to faculty as they determine what to emphasize in their courses and how they may want to assess student learning.

Following are charts and a graph that depict the information presented in this report.

	Tier I					
	AC	EX	NW	Yearly Totals		Yearly % to Tier II
*1993	4	0	2	6	4 students went on to Tier II	*
1994	14	3	6	23	11 students went on to Tier II	48%
1995	28	2	9	39	14 students went on to Tier II	36%
1996	58	8	16	82	34 students went on to Tier II	41%
1997	69	16	29	114	62 students went on to Tier II	54%
1998	65	13	20	98	48 students went on to Tier II	49%
	238	42	82	362	173	
	66%	12%	23%			

* 1993 is a partial year



	Tier II			
	EX	NW	Total Courses	
*1993	3	0	1	
1994	7	2	2	2
1995	9	1	4	4
1996	22	5	7	6
1997	44	10	8	5
1998	41	3	4	4
	126	21	26	21
	73%	12%	15%	

AC - Pass
EX - Pass with Distinction
NW - Needs Work

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